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ABSTRACT

Behavioral objectives and specific lesson material are offered as examples of how students in the intermediate and junior high school grades can be encouraged to respond creatively and uniquely to symbolically structured nonverbal patterns. The use of basic tools of visual literacy allow students to express nonverbal abilities not recognized in verbal tasks. (AA)

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A CREATIVE RESPONSE TO VISUAL LITERACY IN THE MAINSTREAM-- NOT FOR LEARNING DISABLED ONLY

I.R.A.

Microworkshop-May 13, 1976
9:00-11:45 AM

Virginia Royal Inn

CS 003 076

Any non-verbal narration requires a specific quality of creativity which differs from what is required in the usual verbal narration. Traditionally the classroom does not instruct students in the literacy required to view, to respond with, or to evaluate a non-verbal narration.

Mainstreamed placement of learning disabled, hard of hearing, and most other students in the same classroom environment places a responsibility for the development of lessons using techniques which extend the perimeters of response for the visually creative non-verbal youngster. Instead of "turn-up nose" or "turn-off response" in such classes, student reaction results in much unique creativity.

The intent of this project is to offer students in the intermediate and junior high school grades, on any achievement level, who can deal better with the pictorial and symbolical rather than the verbal or the alphabetical, an opportunity to express their ideas successfully and so gain self-esteem by sharing their strengths with classmates.

Working through behavioral objectives, students respond creatively and uniquely to symbolically structured non-verbal patterns. Students become involved in experiences which require them to respond creatively in a non-verbal visual manner. Concentration for these responses rests on student use of basic tools of visual literacy to personally structure pictorial and symbolic patterns (concepts, stories, ideas) which permit them to express non-verbal abilities not fully recognized in either verbal or alphabetic literacy.

Measuring the amount of creativity generated or using a stipulated one absolute machine-scorable response as being creative is not the desired end product of this project. Instead, behavioral objectives have the following long range goals:

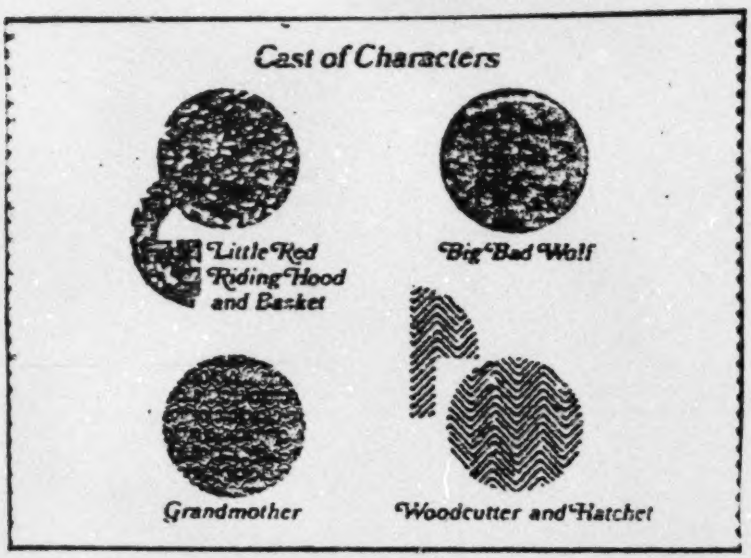
1) focus student attention on the identification of specifically patterned basic non-verbal information; characterization, setting, props, sound effects, action, feature highlights
2) encourage student analysis of non-verbal narratives through interpretation and translation of the basic information
3) require organization of basic information by the student in terms of passage of time
4) direct students to apply the following steps: identification, analysis, organization, application, and evaluation in responding to or in creating a non-verbal visual narrative
5) elicit student self-evaluation and sharing of non-verbal visual narrations.

Using "Little Red Riding Hood" as illustrated by Nancy Earle, instructors can demonstrate a creative symbolic representation of a fairytale. Students are guided through lessons which implement the aforementioned first two objectives.

STEP 1 IDENTIFICATION of Basic Information

Lessons are structured to focus attention on the identification of specifically patterned basic information.

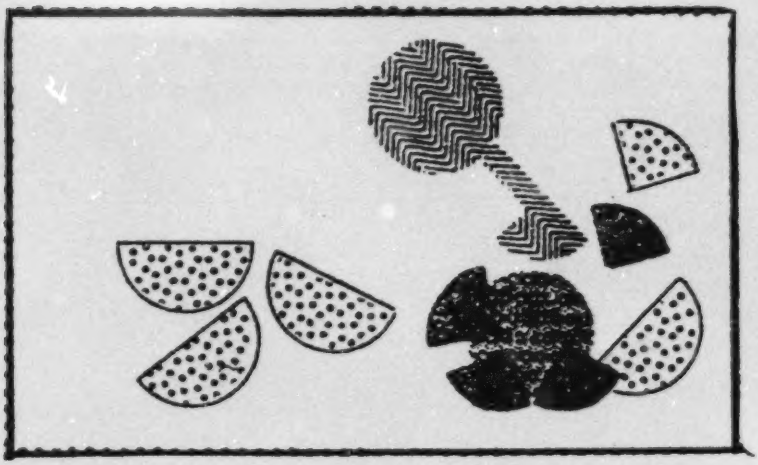
CHARACTERIZATION



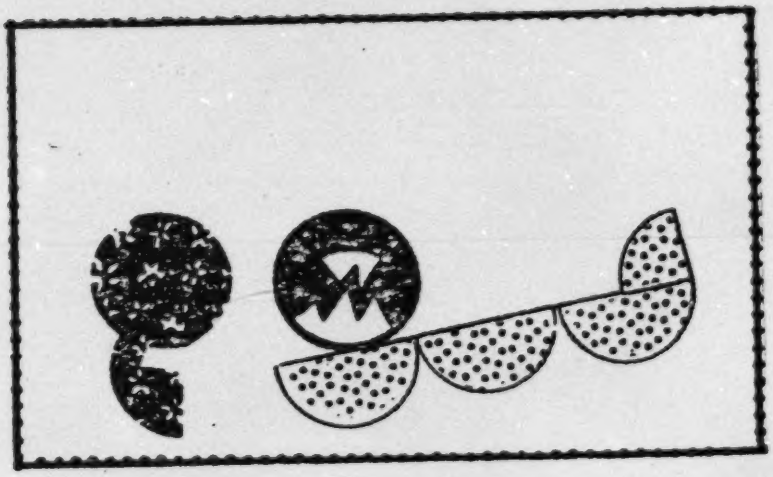
SETTING, USI NG PROPS

SOUND EFFECTS

ACTION



FEATURE HIGHLIGHT



The material presented focuses the attention of the student on those items identified as basic information, which in turn may lead to creative viewing and a response resulting in a comprehension and interpretation of a symbolically presented concept, story, or idea.

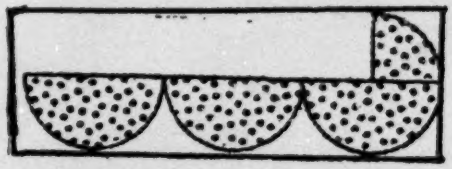
VERBAL INSTRUCTION FOR NON-VERBAL RESPONSE

Implementing these lessons are five steps requiring students to identify, organize, analyze, respond to and evaluate non-verbal symbols as well as alphabetic ones in order to recognize the full range of their literacy. An original verbal-visual study guide contains the following performance objectives:

_____Given the symbol story "Little Red Riding Hood," students can determine the way the author depicts (symbolizes) setting or stage props.

Directions: Write the name of the stage prop under the symbols below:

a._____ b._____



c._____ d._____

_____Given the symbol story "Little Red Riding Hood," students can determine how the author depicts sound effects.

a._____ b._____

_____Given the characters, students can match its appropriate symbol.

Directions: Write the symbol letter next to character listing.

1. Little Red Riding Hood _____
2. Grandmother _____
3. Wolf _____
4. Woodcutter _____

Identification of basic information in such areas as noted permits students to explore and interpret information presented in a similar manner in other visual media.

In behavioral terms the verbal directions are stated thus:

_____Using pictorial materials (comics, advertisements, diagrams, art works, settings), the student can explore them to find examples of symbolically presented settings, actions, sound effects, and feature highlights.

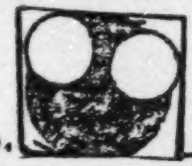
STEP 2 ANALYSIS

Lessons structured to focus attention on analysis of the non-verbal aspects of characterization, feature highlight, setting (props) and action.

Behaviorally stated:

_____Given the symbol story "Little Red Riding Hood," students can determine the way the author highlights facial expressions of characters.

Directions: Which facial part of Little Red Riding Hood is the author emphasizing?

a. b.  c.

_____Given the symbol story "Little Red Riding Hood," Students can determine the way the author uses the symbols to show actions.

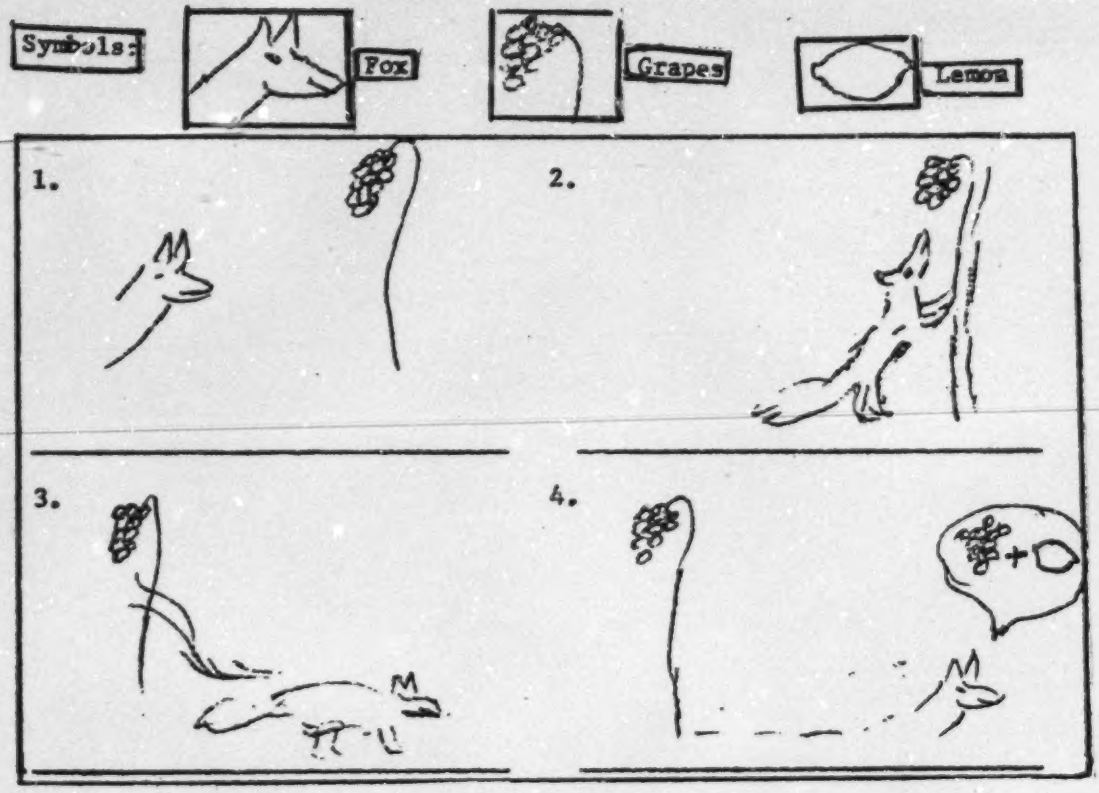
Directions: Write the action each of these symbols shows.

a._____ b._____

c._____

____Students can translate pictorial symbols of the fable "The Fox and The Grapes" as illustrated by Rosen, in verbal terms.

Directions: Write in captions to the visual story "The Fox and The Grapes."



Students were also required to translate the pictorial symbols of other fairytales such as "Goldilocks," "Cinderella" etc. in verbal terms by writing in captions.

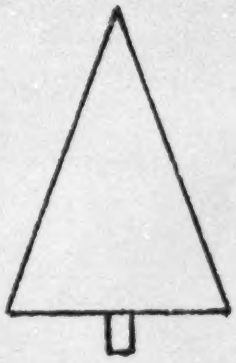
THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

Roberta Rosen

fox

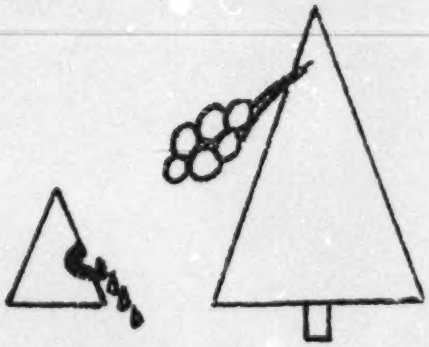
DROOLING

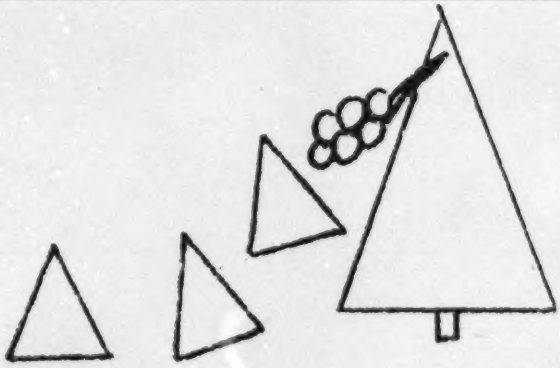
SOUR

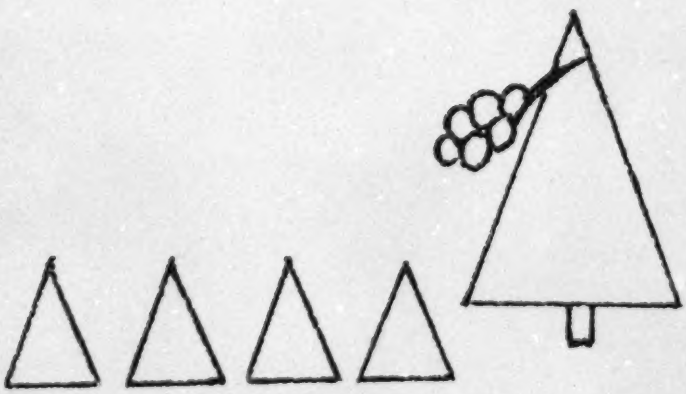


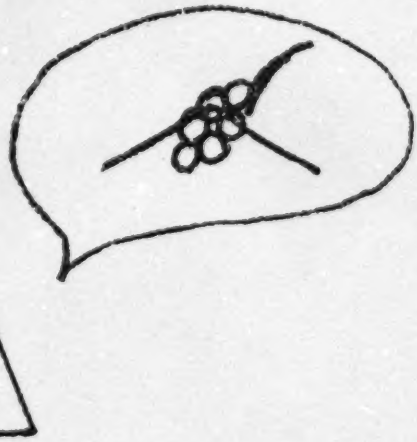
Tree

grapes









STEP 3 ORGANIZATION

Lessons structured to focus attention on the organization of basic information in terms of the passage of time.

As students prepared their symbolic narratives, they felt the need to indicate appropriate visual segments, time designations and setting changes by using framing techniques, time signals, and changes in characterization and setting.

Development of the visual indications of time comes through an activity in which the objective reads:

_____Given written directions, the student can change scenes including the passage of hours, seasons, years, settings or props. Activities included were:

--- Draw a scene that indicates that morning is the beginning of the story.

--- Change the scene to evening.

The following shows the passage of time----

--- Develop your own concept of the passage of time through seasonal change or aging.

--- Change the scene using a new setting completely. Include different climate, weather, clothing designations, sites, etc.

--- Incorporate passage of time in the fable "The Fox and The Grapes," illustrated by Rosen, through time symbols placed in the setting.

The transparency version of the non-verbal science concept "The Life Cycle of the Moth" illustrated by Rosen,

arranged in random order, allowed the student to develop the concept of time passage sequentially by using change of setting and change of main character to organize the story. Students were made aware of the interplay between main character, sequence and setting in the story as they analyzed examples of pictorially presented feature highlights and action. The following objective relates to this step:

_____Given the random arrangement of the non-verbal transparency version of the science concept "The Life Cycle of the Moth," students can organize it in terms of time and translate the non-verbal pictures into verbal form by:

a. Entitling each frame and arranging them in sequential order.

and/or

b. Making a cassette to accompany the wordless story.

STEP 4 RESPONSE

Lessons structured to focus attention on a creative process eliciting a unique and personal response utilizing the tools of visual literacy in specific aspects concentrating on showing character, setting, stage props, feature highlight, action, and time signals. The following are instructions behaviorally stated:

Using the tools of visual literacy, the student can:

1. create one unique or unusual way of showing stage props or setting;
2. create one unique or unusual way of showing sound effects.
3. emphasize a specific feature of a symbol character for a particular purpose.
4. draw one unusual or unique method of showing action through symbols;

5. draw one unusual or unique time signal or change of scene clue.

In correlating with the seventh grade social studies concept of the life cycle of a culture (Rites of Passage) the following visual representation of the passage of time was presented. In behavioral terms students were directed:

_____Given the cultural universal which deals with Rites of Passage (Life Cycle of a Culture), the student can organize the passage of time in a non-verbal presentation.

When symbolizing scientific concepts, students were encouraged to indicate passage of time as they framed and organized their narratives. The following behaviorally stated objective was among the choices.

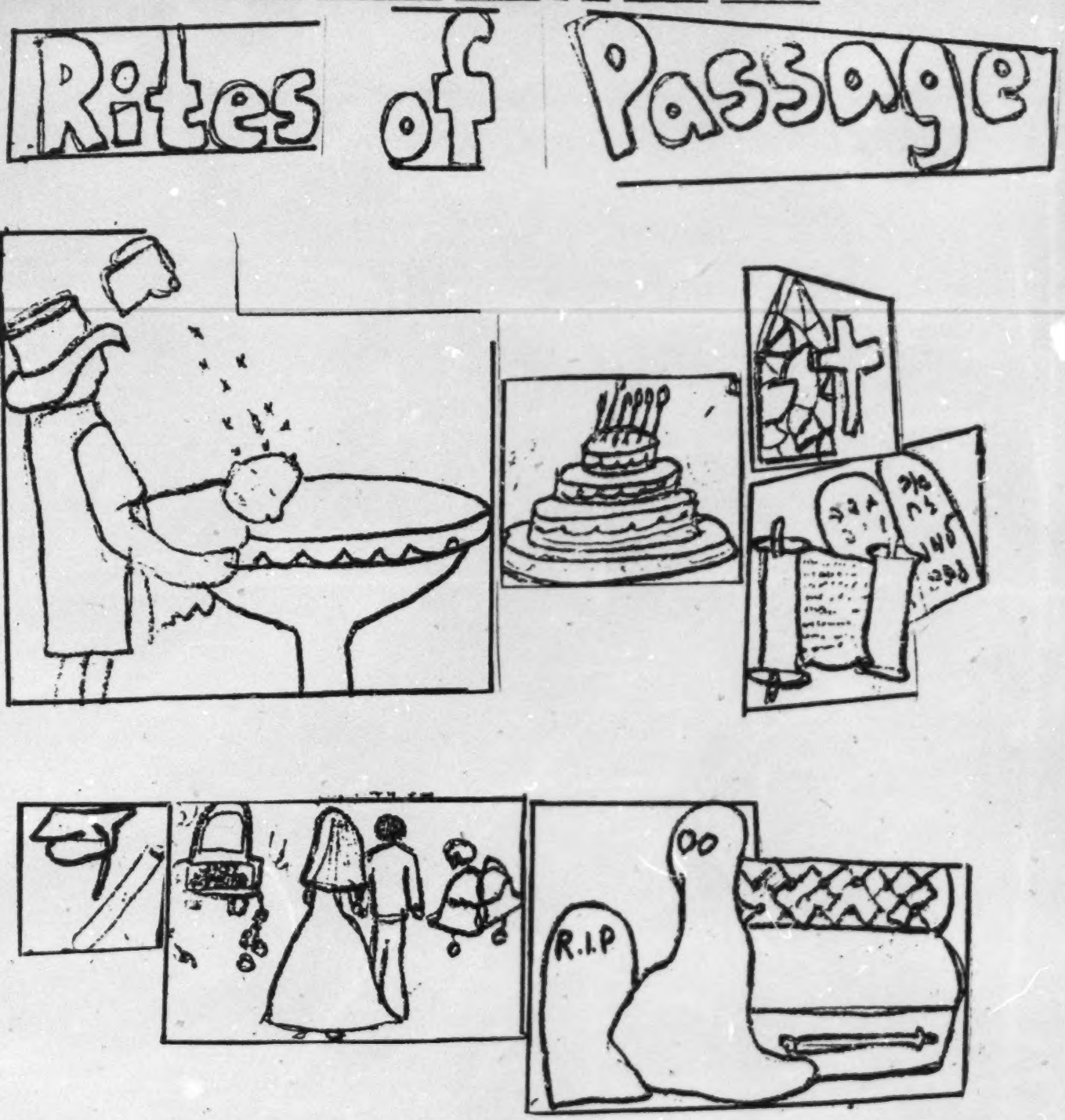
The student can sequentially develop the concept of a metamorphosis of an insect or amphibian through the symbolic or pictorial presentation of character(s) changes, time signals, feature highlights, action and change.

In conclusion, the students selected the narrations or concepts of their choice and presented their non-verbal representations. Behaviorally stated, the assignment read:

_____Using a fairytale, fable, and/or social studies and/or scientific concept with a media of his own choice, the student can present it in a wordless non-verbal version.

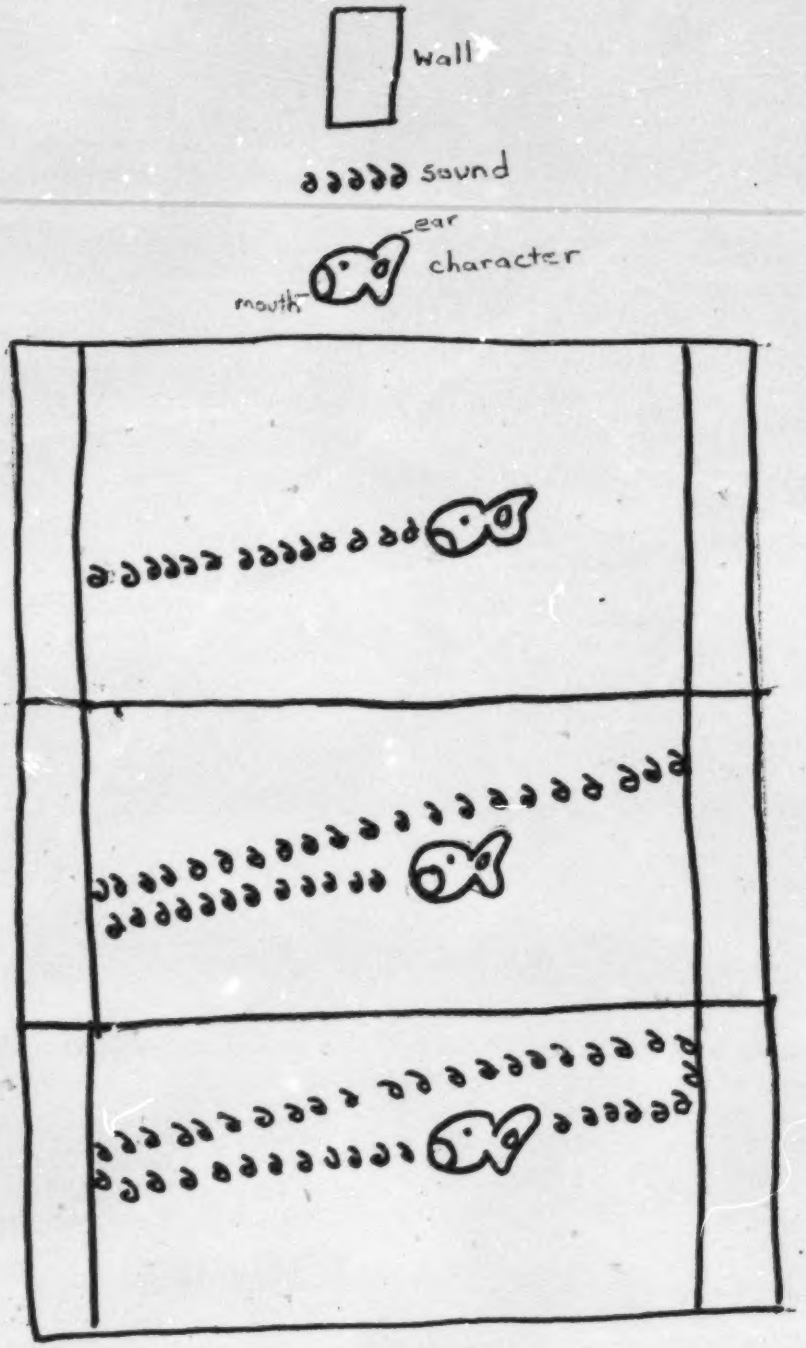
a. Use less than 15 frames
b. Use any media form you wish==slides, transparencies, film-strips, cartoons, and/or picture book, etc.--include symbols (shadow images, outlines, geometrical shapes or other graphics) for main characters, for setting, for feature highlights, and for time signals.

A Sample Pictorial Response in Social Studies



A SAMPLE SYMBOLIC RESPONSE IN SCIENCE

A scientifically oriented student translated the concept of the Echo into symbolic form. This was accepted by his science teacher instead of a composition and acknowledged with honors.



STEP 5 EVALUATION

Students were involved in communicating with their peers using a literacy heretofore untapped. Criteria were constantly developed by the students and peer-judged; work was shared with and outstanding results were recognized by the class. New standards were set for visual literacy and new respect was earned for creativity in the non-verbal mode. Certain students feasted on the first fruits of academic success. Continuous throughout the unit were the following objectives for the purpose of evaluation.

Behaviorally stated:

_____Given original responses of others, students can:

1. evaluate the accuracy of the non-verbal representations by writing captions and/or making a cassette for each frame in order to retell the narration verbally.
2. develop criteria to judge the non-verbal presentation.
3. divide into groups according to the type of narration or concept they are evaluating and select the best example in each group to share with the class.

WHAT DIFFERENCE DID IT MAKE?

Involving students in non-verbal experiences necessary for them to recognize and to use their full range of literacy produces results in non-measurable self-generated creativity and in no one absolute machine-scorable response as being creative. Instead, objectives, behavioral/performance, allow for translating the verbal and alphabetic into the pictorial within the school environment without stifling the imagination. Concentrating on the use of the previously defined basic tools of visual literacy to structure concepts, stories, and ideas

allows for unique expression utilizing non-verbal abilities.

Pictorially and symbolically narrating, students communicate with their peers. Many with learning problems communicate with clarity and originality through this visual non-verbal mode and gain new-found status as well as academic success among both their peers and their instructors.

Drab, verbal, monosyllabic responses change into vivid, artistic, creations, demonstrating talents through visual literacy not used in the verbal and the alphabetic communication of the traditional classroom. Surely visual literacy must be included and implemented to evaluate the full range of any student's literacy.

REFERENCE

1. Earle, Nancy, illustrator, "Little Red Riding Hood," Journal of Reading, Nov. 1974.